



ALABAMA MODEL UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE XII

DISEC

Update Paper

Topic A:

Examining the Potential for Militarization in Outer Space

As the old decade drew to a close on planet earth, many UN member nations began active preparations for reaching once-unthinkable milestones in the year 2020. Any updates or important events, having both been deemed pertinent to the topic at hand and those having transpired in the past couple months, have been summarized in this paper, insofar as their relevance to the topic at hand.

While technological advancements in the spacefaring field may not have made measurable leaps in terms of technology in the past few months, several UN member nations have, in the past several months, announced intentions to push towards the goal of a mission to Mars, in the near future. Such an undertaking, if achieved, would propel any successful member nation to the front of the modern space race. Other member nations, such as the United States, have announced new government branches designed to deal with situations specifically pertaining to outer space. For instance, on December 20, 2019, US President Donald J. Trump formally signed into law the creation of the US Space Force as a branch of the US military.

Additionally, multiple member nations have actively begun testing the feasibility of reusable shuttle style capsules, designed to ferry large loads of equipment and/or personnel towards outer space. One such craft, the American-based Boeing Starliner, has successfully completed unmanned trials; they plan to begin manned trials as soon as early 2020. If successful, American governmental organizations will likely soon have this capability, with other member nations not far behind. Such a step would additionally mark a new era in the spacefaring age.

One event that does not directly pertain to the Potential for the Militarization of Space, but will nevertheless find itself in discussion, was the January 3 assassination of Iranian general Quasem Soleimani by United States military forces. Such a move exacerbated tensions in the region, and they will undoubtedly remain high for quite some time. While this situation does not affect outer-space relations directly, it is crucial to remember that such a move does not put the United States--or the West in general--in a warm light as far as many Middle Eastern countries are concerned. Soleimani, although personally sanctioned by the UN and deemed a terrorist by the United States, was revered by many Iranians as a selfless hero. More importantly, his assassination will cause other players in the Middle East to question their immediate security, as well as question just how secure their alliances with powerful nations such as the United States are.

Topic B:

Organized Cybercrime

In the last three months, the situation regarding cybersecurity across the globe has grown more dire. As the Long Peace has been further threatened, cyber warfare has reiterated itself as an emerging front for the wars of tomorrow.

Recently, the popular social media app TikTok was banned from US military service members' devices following its apparent national security review. There have been concerns in the past that the China-based app is used to harvest data for the Chinese government, and that content critical of the Chinese government is silenced. Apps like Pokemon GO and Strava have previously been under fire for their built-in location tracking, potentially providing an easy backdoor into the layouts of military bases across the globe, should any personnel have location services active.

Additionally, cybersecurity company Malwarebytes recently alleged that UMX U686CL phones, which the US government offers to low-income families, may come preloaded with malware installed by its Chinese manufacturer. Malwarebytes also suggests that the software distributing the malware could be installed on hundreds of millions of Android devices, not just on the specific UMX device. These two new breaches, specifically, raise new questions about the freedoms and security requirements of government-issued communication devices.

Of course, the standard battery of corporate data breaches have occurred as normal, but none have been of exceptional scope or severity. Millions of users' data may have been compromised in any one of these attacks, but this has unfortunately become par for the course. The computerization of sensitive data has led to massive increases in efficiency, but has also allowed for new threats to privacy.

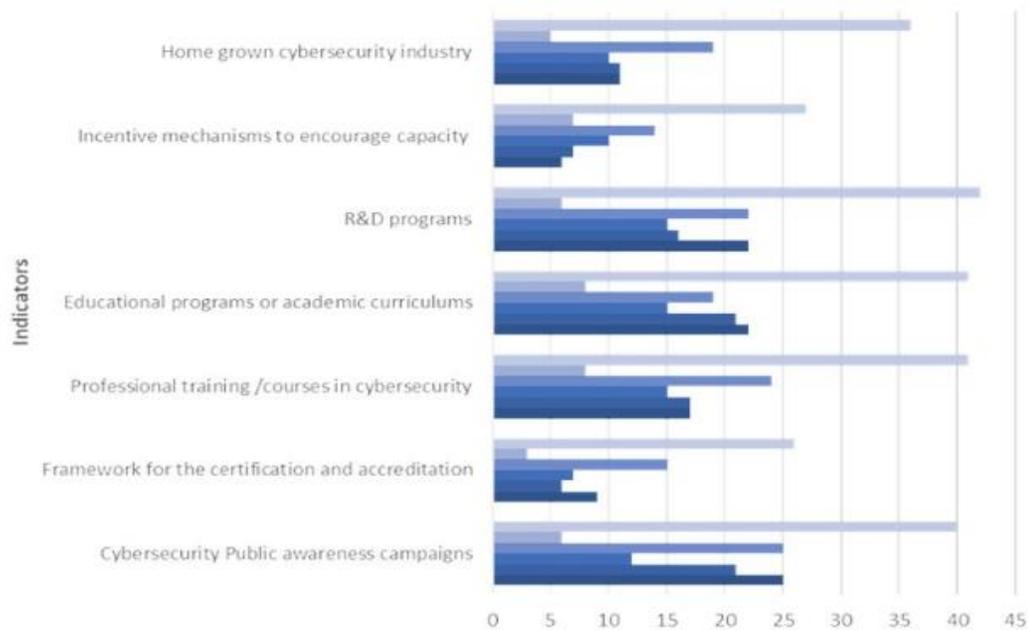
Additionally, a new wave of breaches have recently taken center stage in already pressing geopolitical crises. Following the assassination of Iranian general Qasem Soleimani, a group of hackers claiming Iranian nationality hacked the Federal Depository Library Program and replaced the site with an image mocking President Trump.

In the same vein, as nation-wide protests gripped Iran, a currently unnamed foreign power hacked three major Iranian banks, releasing the banking details of tens of millions of Iranians. High tensions in Iran may have serious cybersecurity implications - as delegates may recall, one of the previous cyberattacks noted in the background guide was directed at Iran, likely by Israel and the United States.

Stuxnet, the mysterious virus that destroyed Iranian nuclear reactors in November 2007, was recently brought back into the news when a report by Yahoo News alleged that a Dutch man hired through AVID (the Dutch intelligence service) played a critical role in the origins of the Stuxnet attack. However, this information may also be affiliated with Israeli intelligence, so a conflict of interest may be present. Be cautious when using this information.

Global Cybersecurity Index 2018

Figure 24: Commitment to the indicators in the capacity building pillar per region



	Cybersecurity Public awareness campaigns	Framework for the certification and accreditation	Professional training /courses in cybersecurity	Educational programs or academic curriculums	R&D programs	Incentive mechanisms to encourage capacity	Home grown cybersecurity industry
Europe	40	26	41	41	42	27	36
CIS	6	3	8	8	6	7	5
Asia-Pacific	25	15	24	19	22	14	19
Arab States	12	7	15	15	15	10	10
Americas	21	6	17	21	16	7	11
Africa	25	9	17	22	22	6	11

No. of Member States with and without the specific indicators per region

■ Europe
 ■ CIS
 ■ Asia-Pacific
 ■ Arab States
 ■ Americas
 ■ Africa

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Topic 1

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Topic 2

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